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OLC 76-3519

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*SAC*

3 December 1976

NOTE FOR: DCI

SUBJECT : Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearings on  
Strategic Nuclear Forces

Per our conversation this morning, it is our understanding that Chuck Percy is the moving force behind the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's hearings beginning in January on policy implications of strategic nuclear forces. As you know, Chairman Sparkman has asked you to appear in open session to address the subject of U.S. /U.S.S.R. strategic balance (letter attached). I think your appearance in an open session would be a bad idea for the following reasons:

1. To our knowledge this subject has not been discussed in an open session previously.
2. Any public statement would have to be so general and vague that it would be meaningless, otherwise, it would reveal most of what we know about Soviet forces, and possibly sources and methods.
3. Since you would probably not want to talk about U.S. forces, you really could not speak on the subject Sparkman would like you to address.

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[redacted] believe it would be helpful if you could talk to Percy as soon as possible to explain to him the problems and indicate your feelings about an open session, while at the same time offering to appear in executive session.

Once you have talked to Percy, I will draft a response to Chairman Sparkman's letter and also get in touch with Pat Holt, Chief of Staff, on the matter.

SIGNED

George L. Cary  
Legislative Counsel

Attachments

Distribution:

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OLC:THW:sf (3 December 1976)

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GLC #78-3511

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

December 1, 1976

The Honorable George Bush  
Director of Central Intelligence  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Bush:

The Committee on Foreign Relations will hold hearings on foreign policy implications of United States strategic nuclear forces in January. I am writing to invite you to testify at the session on January 13. The hearing will be held in Room 4221 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The Committee would welcome your assessment of current trends in the United States-Soviet strategic balance. I hope you could have an unclassified statement and be prepared to respond to questions on that statement in open session. If necessary, I anticipate that the Committee could go into an executive session to receive further details.

If you or your staff have any further questions, please contact Mr. George W. Ashworth of the Committee staff at 224-5381.

Sincerely,

  
John Sparkman  
Chairman

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Extract of Addendum to Journal

Office of Legislative Counsel

Monday - 29 November 1976

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1. [REDACTED] BRIEFING Bill Ashworth, Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff, called saying that at the urging of Senator Charles H. Percy (R., Ill.), Chairman John J. Sparkman (D., Ala.) will hold hearings beginning in January on foreign policy implications of strategic nuclear forces. They would like to schedule a hearing for the 13th of January with the Director as the main witness. To avoid the problem of having reporters and public present at the beginning of a hearing only to go into executive session and be excluded, they would like the Director to give an unclassified statement in open session followed by questions in open session after which they would go into executive session if necessary. The Director would be asked to discuss current trends in the U. S. -Soviet strategic nuclear balance. I told him I would check on the matter and get back to him.